



Building Bright Futures

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802-876-5010 | buildingbrightfutures.org

Building Bright Futures | Strategic Plan FY19

WHO WE ARE

Building Bright Futures (BBF) is Vermont's early childhood public-private partnership established by law to monitor the state's early care, health and education systems and to advise the Administration and legislature on policy and systems improvements. BBF operates at the state and local level to convene stakeholders and community members with a common goal of meeting the diverse needs of all Vermont children and families.

WHAT WE DO

BBF serves as the backbone organization to the early childhood system as a vehicle for collective impact to guide vision and strategy, convene early childhood stakeholders, support aligned activities, establish shared measurement practices, build community engagement, and advance policy. BBF provides a statewide infrastructure and resources to provide capacity to sustain and bring to scale long term systemic change and impact in the community.

WORK AT THE STATE AND REGIONAL LEVEL

State Advisory Council (SAC)

Established by Act 104 in 2010, the State Advisory Council (SAC) is the governor-appointed council on early care, health and education. It serves to advise the governor and Legislature on the needs of Vermont's children ages 0-8 years old, and how programs and services can be strengthened to meet those needs effectively and efficiently. More information at: www.buildingbrightfutures.org/governance/state-advisory-council-members

Regional Councils

BBF has 12 regional councils across the state that consist of a diverse array of representatives from local school districts; law enforcement and criminal justice; business; early care, education and health programs; elected officials; and concerned citizens. Regional councils identify gaps in local programs and services that support children and families in their communities. They advise the SAC and committees on necessary policy changes to strengthen the local systems of care, health and education and create community engagement opportunities to foster positive change for young children. More information at: www.buildingbrightfutures.org/about/councils/regional

MAJOR INITIATIVES

Vermont Insights

Vermont Insights, a program of Building Bright Futures and a partner with the Vermont State Data Center at the University of Vermont Center for Rural Studies, is a new online interactive website that allows users to find and use data about the well-being of Vermont's children, families and communities. The aim of Vermont

Insights is to help leaders, policymakers, families and communities make informed policy and program decisions through the availability of relevant data. www.vermontinsights.org

How Are Vermont's Young Children & Families? Report

This annual report provides a data-based assessment of the well-being young children and their families in Vermont. It is intended to be a useful tool for policy makers, community leaders, service providers, parents and caregivers, educators, and other community members interested in ensuring a safe, healthy, and prosperous future for Vermont.

Vermont's Early Childhood Framework, Action Plan & Committees

The Early Childhood Framework is a document created in 2013 outlining Vermont's commitment to preparing its youngest citizens for future success. The Action Plan is an addendum that charts a course of action for achieving the Framework's six goals:

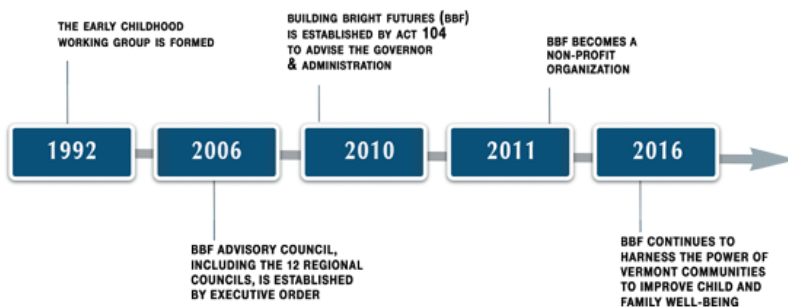
- Goal 1: A Healthy Start for All Children
- Goal 2: Families and Communities Play a Leading Role
- Goal 3: High-Quality Opportunities for All Children
- Goal 4: Invest Now for Our Future
- Goal 5: Know We're Making a Difference
- Goal 6: An Innovative and Connected System

Early Childhood Action Plan Committees

Council members and at-large community members participate in working committees that take a more focused look at different elements of the state's early childhood system. They examine statewide trends to identify challenges within the system and make recommendations on necessary policy changes to address them. BBF's four committees include:

1. Early Childhood Interagency Coordination Team
2. Investing for Children's Future
3. Early Childhood Wellness Committee
4. Professional Preparation & Development Committee
5. Data and Evaluation Committee
6. Early Learning & Development Committee

BUILDING BRIGHT FUTURES TIMELINE



State Advisory Council – ACT 104 Powers & Duties Mapping

Act 104 Powers and Duties	Building Bright Futures Work
<p>Advise the administration on and general assembly on the status of the early care, health, education services and system that supports them and report to the governor and legislature on the councils finding and recommendations (1, 16)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How Are Vermont’s Young Children & Families Report • SAC Policy Recommendations • Other
<p>Select key indicators to be tracked in early childhood and identify priority strategies to improve outcomes. Monitor overall system performance by tracking, reporting and analyzing the data on the well-being of young children and the performance of the system of care related to the councils commitment to children and selected indicators. Ensure that children 0-8 are represented in data systems (2, 13, 14, 15)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vermont Insights & Team • How are Vermont’s Young Children & Families Report • Regional Action Plans • Early Childhood Action Plan
<p>Develop an early care, health and education system plan for Vermont to serve as the basis for policy and funding recommendations (3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Childhood Action Plan • BBF Strategic Plan
<p>Review & formulate recommendations for amendments or revisions to policies, rules or regulations that may impede the ability to address state and local priorities and the ability to ensure system effectiveness (4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAC work
<p>Work with state secretaries to ensure coordination of existing budgets and policies and budgets that affect the care, health and education of young children, and coordinate and integrate the development of an early childhood budget (5, 7)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAC work • Early Childhood Budget (FY18 or FY19)
<p>Identify and reduce duplication of services and administrative approval processes, and improve coordination across agencies (6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAC work • Regional Councils
<p>Support the regional councils in their effort to coordinate and implement services in accordance with priorities in the system and regional plans (8)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Coordinators network • SAC & Regional Council process & procedures
<p>Contract with state agencies and departments to deliver services as agreed upon (9)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBF collaborative partnership and projects
<p>Pursue and accept funding from diverse sources to enhance the early care, health and education system. Disburse funds raised through fund development (10/11)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant Funding
<p>Convene members of the child care community, medical community, education community, and other organizations, as well as state agencies serving young children, to ensure that families receive quality services in the most efficient and cost-effective manner (12)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Councils • SAC

A YEAR IN REVIEW | STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & SUCCESSES OF FY18

BBF Key Leadership Strategies FY18	Success
<p>1. Work with the Executive Committee and Finance Committee to develop a 5 Year strategic financial plan that will ensure fiscal stability and success beyond the sunset of Race to the Top ELC and support core infrastructure to keep BBF a vibrant, healthy and valued organization</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Implemented the FY18 Budget with successful and strategic management of State, Federal and Philanthropic Funds and continued growth of organizational assets <input type="checkbox"/> Increased philanthropic and grant revenue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Henderson Foundation \$50,000 b. UVM Collective Impact Grants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. \$30,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Completed a successful FY18 Audit with no material findings
<p>2. Continued work to refine and implement cost effective and efficient models of Regional Coordination with key partners and staff to support a sustainable organizational and financial model for the statewide Regional Coordinators & Councils</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Developed a plan and vision in collaboration with the Regional Coordinators, Regional Councils & Leadership & other stakeholders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Hosted 2 Regional Council Leadership Meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Implemented 3 Models of Regional Coordination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 1 Regional Coordinator supporting 2 Regions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Central Vermont/Lamoille ▪ Addison/Rutland ▪ Northern Windsor Orange/Springfield ▪ Orleans Northern Essex/Caledonia Southern Essex o Shared Position – 50/50 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Franklin Grand Isle o Part-time Regional Coordinator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brattleboro <input type="checkbox"/> Region Council Impact and Accomplishments (please refer to Addendum A)
<p>3. Successfully launch the new Early Childhood Action Plan Implementation Cycle and operationalize the link and relationship between the State Advisory Council and the ECAP Committee’s. Establish the Family & Communities Committee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Successfully launched ECAP Implementation Cycle July 2018 <input type="checkbox"/> Established Families & Communities Committee <input type="checkbox"/> Refined vision and focus of work for committees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o ECICT o PPD o Early Learning & Development
<p>4. To develop a strategic business plan and model to support the continued implementation and sustainability of Vermont Insights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Developed and implemented a significantly reduced budget for VI and maintained functionality and user engagement <input type="checkbox"/> Development of Vermont Insights on a non-proprietary platform to include use and functionality
<p>5. To support and empower the State Advisory Council to be an active Advisory Board and to strengthen and align the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Engaged State Advisory Council Members to refine and define its role within the framework of ACT 104

work at the state and local level

- Focused on meeting planning and facilitation, and implemented an annual calendar with focused priority topic areas
 - Increased SAC Member attendance and engagement
 - Substance Use & Opiate Task Force – Report and Recommendations
- Advanced the SAC’s visibility, credibility and role as advisory to Governor and Legislature
 - BBF Legislative Breakfast in December 2017
 - Successfully launched How Are Vermont’s Young Children & Families Report with a successful media campaign & press conference (January 2018)
 - ACT 166 Feedback Report



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2019 Strategic Plan

Purpose

To strengthen BBF as Vermont’s “trusted”, “go to” and “essential” early childhood collective impact organization and to the achieve financial resources required to fund the organizations work

Strategic Goals

Achieve Fiscal Stability	Improve Systems & Policy Advisement	Expand Data, Monitoring & Accountability	Strengthen Community Convening	Organizational Impact & Accountability
Key Initiatives & Strategies				
<p>1. Resource Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Exec. Committee & Finance Committee to develop 5 year fiscal plan • Increase revenue by \$400,000 - 500,000 by June 30th, 2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$200 - 300k State ○ \$50K Corporate ○ \$50K VT philanthropy ○ \$100K Federal & National Grants <p>2. Fundraising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop fundraising plan <p>3. Increase Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headstart • PCC’s • United Way • DMH • AOE 	<p>1. State Advisory Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Execute the duties & powers under Act 104 • Refine priority policy development process, aligned with Act 104 • Strengthen SAC process & function to be the “go to”, “credible”, “thought leader” and table for early childhood systems & policy work • Strengthen relationship and feedback loops with Regional Councils 	<p>1. Vermont Insights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand data & Functionality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Build the array of reports and data available ○ Improve presence and use ○ Stakeholder and user needs/priorities • Build on and develop the VI Business Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Customer & investor base ○ Revenue streams <p>2. Early Childhood Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successfully manage the 2nd year of the ECAP Implementation Cycle • Launch the ECAP Scorecard/Dashboard <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ September 2018 • Define and plan for how the ECAP will be updated and changed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Short Term (front facing current document) ○ Long Term (July 2019) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revamp/writing of Action Plan • Establish the “Investing for Children’s Future” Committee 	<p>1. Regional Coordination & Councils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine & continue to implement efficient & effective coordination model • Refine role and scope of focus of coordinators to balance regional initiatives and statewide collective work • Support councils to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expand diversity of representation at council meetings ○ Develop annual priorities & accountability to move 	<p>1. Results & Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly define results and performance measures for BBF using RBA to demonstrate impact at the state and community level <p>2. Annual Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Produce an annual report • September 2018 <p>3. Feedback process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop a statewide process to receive 360 feedback at the state and regional level

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successfully manage and facilitate the work of Building Vermont's Future Think Tank 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop "ownership/investment" of the Governor • Utilize the ECAP Implementation cycle and structure to develop and drive policy recommendations to be included in the HAVYCF Report 	<p>regional work forward</p>	



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Addendum A: Regional Council Annual Review and Priority Setting

Regional Council Action Plan Annual Review and Priority Setting

All Regions Summary

June, 2018

Region: Addison

Regional Coordinator: Darla Senecal

1. Describe 1 or 2 significant changes your region experienced as demonstrated by your action plan and data review?

The Addison Council continues to coordinate BBF and Integrating FAmily Services. The Council has invested in resiliency training for staff from a variety of agencies and offered the Bounce Resiliency training for families. Parent Child Centers, CSAC and IFS/BBF all have offered a number of parent education opportunities. Another significant accomplishment has been a 75% increase in STARS participation in Addison County demonstrating an increase in quality early learning and pre k that are accessible for the whole population.

2. What is one significant accomplishment your Council wants to celebrate in meeting your Regional Action Plan strategies?

The Addison Early MTSS group is organized an in-service professional development opportunity on social emotional development presented by Meg Baker and Mary Jane Broughton. The training and follow-up coaching will include attachment and relationship building and establishing daily routines and environments that support social-emotional development. It will help teachers coping with challenging behaviors and teaching social-emotional skills such as self-regulation, emotional literacy, friendship skills, problem-solving, and anger management. This training supports the social-emotional development priorities in the Addison Action Plan.

3. What are systems gaps or opportunities your region wants to highlight to inform State level priorities?

Gaps/Opportunities 1: Build capacity for social emotional well-being as prevention.

The Addison BBF/IFS Council is currently developing a county wide program called “bounce” this program will offer strategies for all age groups to support and promote resiliency in our communities. State funding to support Mental Health initiatives is required to support this work.

Gaps/Opportunities 2: Supports to attract, train and retain quality staff.

The Addison Council is currently working with CCV to develop a Non-profit leadership class with an emphasis on Early Education. Support to help keep costs of such classes available and affordable is important.

Gaps/Opportunities 3: The need for year-round high quality care.

Many regular child care programs follow a school calendar. Leaving families to find alternate care during summer months. Often, summer programs run abbreviated schedules that are difficult to navigate with a 9-5

work schedule Due to school cleaning schedules many programs that use those facilities are limited as to how many weeks they can offer programming.

In many communities Expanded Learning Programs (21st Century Grant) seem to be marginalizing many long term previously existing programs. Typically, ELP only runs for 5 weeks. Parents are left to “patchwork” summer care. The Addison Council Steering Committee is drafting a letter to area school superintendents outlining the issue and to express concerns and brainstorm ideas that may be helpful to families who need care all summer. State Support for high quality year-round care would be important.

Region: Bennington

Regional Coordinator: Robin Stromgren

1. Describe 1 or 2 significant changes your region experienced as demonstrated by your action plan and data review?

There was a significant increase in the number of registered home and licensed centers who have a STARS rating. There are 48.1% licensed Centers that have 3,4 or 5 Stars. Register homes that have 3, 4, or 5 STARS ate at 21.1%. This was improved number is result for registered homes was supported by the Strengthening Families cohort of 13 home providers.

The number of professional development trainings sponsored by the region for early childhood professionals. These trainings included Creative Curriculum, a local VELs training, introduction and level 2, NEAR Sciences for Building a Flourishing Community, Building Resilience with Dr. Jody Brakeley, Vicarious Trauma, and the local fall conference that has 200 participants.

2. What is one significant accomplishment your Council wants to celebrate in meeting your Regional Action Plan strategies?

The Bennington Council celebrates the use of professional development as the way that They accomplish changes in the regional plan. The majority of the PD opportunities are broad based and assist the cross sector work. Professional Development grows knowledge, builds skills and changes attitudes.

3. What are systems gaps or opportunities your region wants to highlight to inform State level priorities?

Gaps/Opportunities 1: The concern that access to childcare is a multi-pronged issue. There is expressed concern about transportation. The DCF-FS director pointed out that 64 PS children are transported plus the 48 transported on Head Start buses. The transportation committee will be reactivated to look into this issue and make some recommendation.

Gaps/Opportunities 2: There is a concern about children living with maternal depression. The MCH coalition will be asked to help spearhead this initiative. This initiative will be expanded to beyond the post-partum period. The first step will be to gather data to understand the complexity of the issue for Bennington County and to look at the historical data when post-partum depression was a priority of the regional plan.

Gaps/Opportunities 3: There was a desire that a broader outcome be added to the regional plan: All Children’s Basic Needs are met. The regional coordinator will convene a meeting of interested people to define the issue and outcome steps.

Region: Caledonia and Southern Essex
Regional Coordinator: Dawn Powers

1. Describe 1 or 2 significant changes your region experienced as demonstrated by your action plan and data review?

The Caledonia and Southern Essex BBF Regional Council has increased early childhood staff and home visitor qualifications/expertise through high quality professional development opportunities.

Provided support for our two Promise Community initiatives (Lyndonville and St. Johnsbury) both of which are incredible resources to the families in our region providing parent education/ leadership opportunities, community activities/trips and concrete supports to meet family's basic needs.

2. What is one significant accomplishment your Council wants to celebrate in meeting your Regional Action Plan strategies?

The Caledonia and Southern Essex BBF Regional Council offered a range of support for adults and their children impacted by substance use disorders. The Council is assessing current resources in our community for parents/ caregivers with substance abuse issues. They are also engaging state partners to continue to prioritize this issue; bring awareness about the impacts of this disorder; advocate for resources and support regional efforts to address this issue.

Region: Central Vermont
Regional Coordinator: Steve Ames

1. Describe 1 or 2 significant changes your region experienced as demonstrated by your action plan and data review?

Collaboration among early childhood partners is a significant accomplishment in part due to the networking at the Central Vermont BBF Council, strong support of the Barre and Northfield Promise Community efforts, and partnerships with Children's Integrated Services and Nurse Family Partnership. The visibility and alliance of early childhood organizations and has driven the Council agenda at critical regional collaboratives including the ACH and the Vermont Legislature.

2. What is one significant accomplishment your Council wants to celebrate in meeting your Regional Action Plan strategies?

There is greater clarity around Pre-K access for families across the region and improvements to the delivery of Pre-K services in both private and public settings.

3. What are systems gaps or opportunities your region wants to highlight to inform State level priorities?

Gaps/Opportunities 1: The lack of quality child care capacity, workforce shortage and increase in unregistered care.

Gaps/Opportunities 2: Disorganized delivery of professional development for early care and learning professionals.

Gaps/Opportunities 3: State contracting practices are squeezing contractors out of business by long term level funding and under funding. The region's outstanding outcomes for Maternal Child Health through the network of parent child centers and systems of early intervention and home visiting cannot survive without significant changes to their funding structures.

Region: Franklin Grand Isle

Regional Coordinator: Margaret Maley

1. Describe 1 or 2 significant changes your region experienced as demonstrated by your action plan and data review?

Result # 2: all families are healthy with thriving children who are safe within a trauma informed community. Concrete supports in times of need are critical, and our diaper drive has had a consistent presence in the community for nearly 3 months at 8 different locations including grocery stores, mental health agencies, churches and our local hospital. Our current estimate of collected diapers is around 350 and counting. Diapers are being distributed to our local community action agency, food shelves, home health agency, and Parent Child Center. The distribution locations are intentional; we know transportation is a barrier and want to meet families where they are at. Future drives are in the developing stages but will include back to school supplies and toiletries as these are not covered under WIC or food stamps. The hope is to mitigate the risks associated with poor health and hygiene conditions for children and families.

2. What is one significant accomplishment your Council wants to celebrate in meeting your Regional Action Plan strategies?

The Hunger Vital Sign is a new standard for preventative health and is expanding to practices in the region. Discussions are occurring around best practices around appropriate referrals to mental health, 211, community action agencies and data collection. Data points we considered: will the Hunger Vital reduce 3Squares rates? Increase WIC and food shelf access? The goal is to collaborate with agencies to track this critical data as the assessment process unfolds.

3. What are systems gaps or opportunities your region wants to highlight to inform State level priorities?

A concern and gap in our community is the level of funding administered to support paid staff for food shelves. Currently, there is only one paid staff in all of Franklin and Grand Isle counties to support the food shelves- the rest are volunteer. We are fortunate that home visitors, housing staff, child care coordinators and funding sources support many of these unmet needs in our community; however the council is concerned that food security initiatives are vastly underfunded. Our council has been tasked with informing the public around free summer meal sites in the region Vermont, serving on the Hunger Free VT council, promoting the use of cash crop and WIC dollars at local farmers markets, and gathering data on the Hunger Vital Sign. The hope is for state level partners to continue to invest in and advocate for programs that provide nutritious meals universally in addition to targeted vulnerable populations.

Region: Lamoille

Regional Coordinator: Steve Ames

We're proud of our work to continue a low rate of child custody, an increasingly high level of 4 and 5 STARS childcare center ratings, and access to supports for young children and families.

The Lamoille Valley has experienced significant collaboration among early childhood partners through BBF's Council networking, strong support of the Craftsbury, Eden and Morrisville Promise Communities, worked to address challenging homelessness problems in the region, and increased childcare capacity.

Significant accomplishment our Council wants to celebrate in meeting your Regional Action Plan strategies:

Lamoille Valley early childhood work has led to a significant increase in the understanding of the social determinants of health - and through work starting some time ago around Strengthening Families, pediatric and perinatal social workers are now embedded in our Pediatricians office through DUCLE and our Women's Health Center at Copley Hospital.

Systems gaps or opportunities our region wants to highlight to inform State level priorities:

PreK capacity remains problematic, and special education access and early intervention services are not being delivered to PreK, and younger children who need to seek care outside of the reach of the Supervisory Unions.

State contracting practices are squeezing contractors out of business by long term level funding and under funding. Our outstanding outcomes for Maternal Child Health network of parent child centers and systems of early intervention and home visiting cannot survive without significant changes to their funding structures.

Region: Northern Windsor and Orange County

Regional Coordinator: Ellen Taetzsch

1. Describe 1 or 2 significant changes your region experienced as demonstrated by your action plan and data review?

One significant change that the region experienced was an increase in DCF custody especially since 2014. The council noted that the increase may indicate that more children are in a safer environment however finding foster parents continues to be a challenge and therefore come children remain in unsafe situations. The council has continued to promote parenting groups and classes and family activities to begin to build parental resilience and knowledge. The council would also like to note that this year has been a rebuilding year.

2. What is one significant accomplishment your Council wants to celebrate in meeting your Regional Action Plan strategies?

The council identified workforce recruitment and retention as a critical need in the area. In order to address this the council is hosting a job fair June 19th specific to the early childhood field with over 15 employers signed up to participate and two colleges available to help those with information on pathways into the field.

3. What are systems gaps or opportunities your region wants to highlight to inform State level priorities?

Gaps/Opportunities 1 -The council would like the state to look at the Ready For Kindergarten Survey and creating trainings and consistency with the implementation of this tool. One way would be to create a similar training as TS Gold's interrater reliability training. Our region will continue to use this data knowing its limitations.

Gaps/Opportunities 2 -Another opportunity is to look at workforce retention and recruitment. Some suggestions for this would be looking at loan forgiveness if someone works at an early childhood setting for a certain number of years, looking at increasing pay or other incentives. The region is hosting job fair and through that collecting some data on barriers for entering the field and why people want to enter the field.

Gaps/Opportunities 3-The council would like to also recommend the state continue to work on ACEs/Toxic Stress/ Strengthening Families. We would like more spending on prevention, transitional housing for the entire family, mental health services, etc. The council is continuing to work on getting information into the community through screenings of Resilience and Paper Tigers.

Region: Orleans and Northern Essex

Regional Coordinator: Dawn Powers

We reviewed data from How are VT's Young Children and Families 2017 report for our region; the 2018 Stalled at the Start report (see highlights below), personal stories from families and community partners and preliminary findings from a regional child care capacity survey created by NEKCA PCC North and the BBF Coordinator. These findings demonstrated the need to prioritize our work to promote, support and create high-quality child care in our region. In addition, the review of the data supported our need to continue to support school readiness and family support efforts.

What is one significant accomplishment your Council wants to celebrate in meeting your Regional Action Plan strategies?

At our June BBF Regional Council meeting we reviewed pertinent data and council achievements in our year-in-review exercise, we accomplished many great things. However, two initiatives stood out as our most significant accomplishments related to our action plan strategies. They were:

- Reconvened Early MTSS Leadership Team in ONE and drafted ONE Early MTSS Mission & Vision statements as well as developed an Early MTSS Regional Action Plan
- Implemented BBF Welcome Baby Bag Initiative at two pilot sites – North Country Pediatrics and Border Pediatrics

What are systems gaps or opportunities your region wants to highlight to inform State level priorities? Provide a sentence on a) what are you planning to do about them and b) what would you like your state level partners to do.

One of the most significant system gaps identified in our community is the ability for families to access and afford quality child care in our region. Another gap is the continued support for pilot programs (i.e. Early MTSS) or statewide initiatives (i.e. Promise Communities) when they are found successful or to ensure their success.

* We are working on these issues as outlined in our revised ONE EC Action Plan-June 2018.

Region: Rutland

Regional Coordinator: Darla Senecal

1. Describe 1 or 2 significant changes your region experienced as demonstrated by your action plan and data review?

- Immunization rates of children 19-35 months increased by 66.4% 2013-2016 (2017 BBF “How are Vermont’s Young Children and Families)

- Families have access to high quality and affordable child care STARS Participation increased by 70.1%, 2010-2017, (2017 BBF “How are Vermont’s Young Children and Families)
- Access to Healthy foods is a growing concern in Rutland County.
- The number of families accessing WIC has continued to drop and area Food Bank use is on the rise. (per Rutland office of the Dept. of Health)

2. What is one significant accomplishment your Council wants to celebrate in meeting your Regional Action Plan strategies?

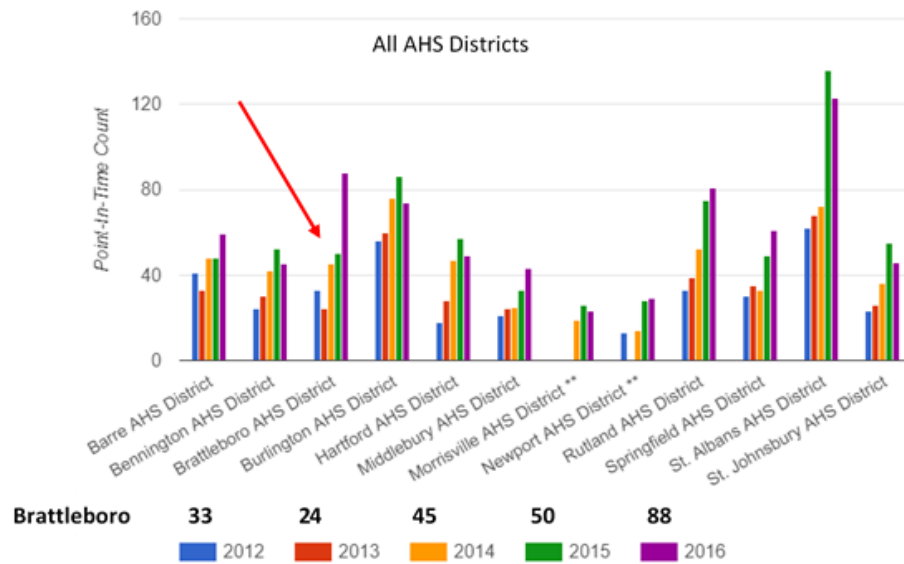
The Council participated in training about ACES with Dr. Johanna Brakely. Along with a screening of the Resilience film, helped deepen the understanding of families with these issues and how providers can best support them. The Council looks to continue and expand upon this topic recognizing the importance of their role as early educators.

3. What are systems gaps or opportunities your region wants to highlight to inform State level priorities?

Gaps/Opportunities 1-With an increased need for high quality child care, support for professional development for providers is essential. Special attention in the area of safety training around challenging families (children with ACES/mental health issues & incarcerated family members). As a Council we will seek out training opportunities for continued educational supports for providers in an effort to create a “toolbox” of resources. At the State level, funding to support Mental Health resources would be important.

Gaps/Opportunities 2-The ability to offer wages for providers that will aide in attracting and retaining quality staffing. The Council will continue to seek out and promote professional development opportunities for area providers. In order to maintain and expand upon the level of high quality child care already available in Rutland county. Continued increases to the subsidy rates bringing them to current levels would support this.

Point-In-Time Count of Children and Youth (per 1,000) in the Department for Children and Families (DCF) Custody, by Vermont Agency of Human Services (AHS) District, Year, and Age (source: <http://vermontinsights.org/point-in-time-rate-children-in-dcf-custody>, <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/im1802.pdf>)



1. Describe 1 or 2 significant changes your region experienced as demonstrated by your action plan and data review?

The most significant and complex change in Southeast Vermont has been the troubling rise in the number of children in DCF custody. As a council, we have realized that we do not yet know the full story behind the curve.

We hope to convene as a neutral party to bring our collaborative attention to the multiple, complex and systemic, variables contributing to this result. We also hope to gain, and share, clarity on policy, practice, and planned improvements for the child welfare system. The ‘How?’ of this process is especially important for building trust and community capacity for resilience. This will include learning from our impacted families, community members, partner agencies, and local and outside experts.

Southeast Vermont has many regionally appropriate strengths on which to build a coordinated community approach to keep all children safe, and support the opportunities for children and families to thrive.

2. What is one significant accomplishment your Council wants to celebrate in meeting your Regional Action Plan strategies?

Over the past several years, the council has focused on the issues of Early Care and Learning, Kindergarten Readiness, and Family Friendly Workplace Policies. Bringing these issues to the forefront in our council meetings and strategies has led to broader community awareness and collaboration between community partners. This track record of increasing awareness and collaboration for complex issues lends credibility as we turn our attention to the rising rate of children in custody.

3. What are systems gaps or opportunities your region wants to highlight to inform State level priorities?

There appear to be discrepancies in the understanding of policies and practices surrounding the child welfare system in SeVT. There is anecdotal evidence that these discrepancies may be leading to fewer individuals and families accessing necessary services. SeVT is hoping to bring clarity about these policies and practices to ourselves, community members, and partners.

State level partners can support our council by communicating program improvement plan progress and increasing opportunities for collaboration with all stakeholders. This may include an inclusive budgeting process in light of the recent federal Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA)¹. The FFPSA provides an opportunity to expand the scope for existing federal resources to fund evidence based prevention services to provide support, resources, and skills that will allow all families and communities to raise thriving children.

Region: Springfield Area

Regional Coordinator: Ellen Taetzsch

1. Describe 1 or 2 significant changes your region experienced as demonstrated by your action plan and data review?

One significant change that the Springfield Area region experienced was increase in DCF custody. The council has been trying to mitigated the impact of this by supporting family events, expanding our Welcome Baby Program and working with the local ACEs group to address this issue. The opioid crisis and generational poverty have impacted DCF custody.

2. What is one significant accomplishment your Council wants to celebrate in meeting your Regional Action Plan strategies?

One significant accomplishment that the council has had in the past year is its commitment to family engagement supporting or participating in over 10 events or trainings specifically targeting families or parents of young children.

3. What are systems gaps or opportunities your region wants to highlight to inform State level priorities?

Gaps/Opportunities 1-Workforce recruitment and retention is a need we see in the region. Increasing the wages of employees in all field of early childhood, finding other incentives like student loan forgiveness. The council is trying to ensure that it spreads information regarding professional development opportunities to the field.

Gaps/Opportunities 2- Foster care recruitment and support is also another issue we would like the state to look at as well as support for childcares with high numbers of foster children. The ways in which the region is supporting this effort is to provide trainings for foster parents as well as support with Aces information.

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